

[2 August, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

establishment and maintenance of the Santushti Complex and the utilisation of funds; and

(b) if so, the decisions arrived at?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) and (b) The report submitted by the Enquiry Officer is under active consideration of the Government.

Completion of projects undertaken by DRDO

1264. PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the last decade the Defence Research and Development Organisation has taken up 180 projects out of which only 99 projects have been completed successfully;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are being taken to complete the remaining projects immediately to avoid cost escalation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) and (b) The 180 projects were undertaken for the three Services at different points of time during the last decade and these projects were of different time durations. The remaining on-going projects are in various stages of execution.

(c) The projects are periodically subjected to multi-layer reviews to identify and solve the problems, which otherwise may lead to escalation in time and cost.

Re-opening of Srinagar-Rawalpindi Marg

[†]1265. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are trying to find out any solution with regard to re-opening of Srinagar-Rawalpindi highway, which is closed for the last fifty years and to simplify the formalities regarding visa;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if so, by when an action would be taken in the direction of ensuring easy movement of people of India and Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Government are of the view that the promotion of people-to-people contacts between India and Pakistan, will contribute to our desire to establish peaceful, friendly and cooperative ties with Pakistan.

In keeping with this approach, and to promote a congenial environment and confidence building before the visit of President Pervez Musharraf to India (14—16 July, 2001), Government announced several significant initiatives amongst which were measures to promote further people-to-people contacts along the International boundary and the Line of Control. On 9th July, 2001, Government announced that henceforth, Pakistani passport holders would be allowed to come by the road route and obtain visas at the check post at Attari. An additional check post will be opened at Munabao in Rajasthan. Similar check posts will also be opened at designated points along the International boundary and the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir. Government also specified that administrative arrangements including those for transport would be urgently put in place so as to implement these decisions within three months.

[†]Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.